

NASA Academy Agenda

Topic: Community Service Day @ Watts Branch Park

Date: Saturday - July 10, 2004

Description:

Washington Parks & People is the capital's nationally acclaimed city-wide community parks partnership. The organization began work 13 years ago with the dramatic and award-winning transformation of Meridian Hill/ Malcolm X Park from the single most violent national park in the capital region into one of the safest. Washington is the greenest city in North America, with the highest percentage of public green space of any city on the continent. Yet in many of the most forgotten and abandoned inner-city neighborhoods that most need safe, positive green spaces, parks are under-maintained, unsafe, disused, disconnected, and devoid of arts, education, or positive programs of any kind. Instead of being centers of community, key inner-city parks often become centers of massive abandonment. Watts Branch Park in NE Washington, a long-forgotten and neglected park. It's long and skinny - about 1.6 miles long and 2-3 blocks wide. It's slowly transforming it into a vibrant, living community park through the help of thousands of volunteers. Basic tasks generally include: 1) Opening up sightlines. If folks can see from one section to the next, they're more apt to use it, which increases traffic and security. Prune like mad - bushes, trees, etc. 2) Create/reform tree rings. Tree rings are those saucer shaped molds around trees made from mulch and dirt that pull water down to the roots of new or young trees. We have a high survival rate of our trees since we do this. 3) Remove debris from the stream, path and park. This may involve some actual garbage pickup but it also may involve putting on boots and getting into the water and pulling stuff out... for the adventurous... 4) Clearing out invasives such as English ivy and kudzu - they have been growing like crazy and we want to replace them native plants! 5) Installing bollards. These are anti-dumping posts that prevent folks from backing up into the park and dumping their stuff like tires, garbage etc. (very dirty and hard work!) and possibly but unlikely 6) planting.

We ask that you come dressed to get dirty, with long pants and closed toe shoes, and that you bring with you water, enthusiasm and a friendly attitude. We also ask that all of you smile and say hello to the folks walking by. Community development involves breaking down barriers and just saying hey is a simple and easy way to keep that process moving along.

Bring: Packed lunch and drink, water bottle, a big smile, long pants, sneakers or any closed-toe shoes, hat, sunglasses, change of clothes, backpack

07:00-08:00:	Breakfast (on your own) and Pack/ Buy Lunch
08:00:	Depart Academy house in Vans and drive to Riverside Center and Heritage Green, located in the center of Watts Branch Park at 5200 Foote St, NE, D.C.
09:00:	Orientation on the park, training on the tasks for the day and distribution of tools and gloves.
09:00-14:00:	Work, Smile, and Have Fun at Watts Branch Park with Washington Parks and People
14:00-15:00:	Depart to College Park
15:00-17:00:	Personal Time
17:00-17:30:	Motorpool to Diaz, Center Director's House
Evening:	BBQ

Driving Directions from Baltimore and points north:

1. Take 295 S towards DC
2. Take the BURROUGHS AVE exit towards MINNESOTA AVE. When you come off the exit you will come to an intersection of stop signs. To your right is Kenilworth Park.
3. Turn **left under the overpass** onto NANNIE HELEN BURROUGHS AVE NE.

Go straight on BURROUGHS for about 3/4 mile to DIVISION AVE. At the corner of Division and Nannie Helen Burroughs are the Strand Theatre and a BP gas station. Turn **right** onto DIVISION AVE, and 5200 Foote St is one block down. Turn **left** at the corner of Division and Foote St and park in the cul de sac. Our building is on the corner of Division Avenue and Foote St, NE with the entrance on Foote St. There is ample parking on the street at Foote St and Division Avenue. If you have any problems such as getting turned around or arriving later than expected, please contact us at the Riverside Center at 202/398-7275.

